(a) whether Union Government are keeping a watch on the manufacture of computers in the country with a view to ensure the people here get the computers of certain minimum quality and specifications;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the percentage of imported components in the computers being sold in the country;

(d) the efforts being made to produce indigenously all the computer components in the country; and

(e) the quantity of silicon chips being produced in India ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) The Standardisation, Testing & Quality Certification (STQC) Directorate under the Department of Electronics has formulated specifications for personal computers and peripherals with participations from Industry Associations, Bureau of Indian Standards, Computer Society of India etc. STQC Directorate has set up various test laboratories for Electronic Industries including IT products to get their products tested to a particular specifications.

(c) The percentage of imported components in the computer being sold in the country varies from one configuration to the other. On an average, the value of import contents in personal computers is about 45% of the ex-factory price.

(d) Encouragement for indigenisation of the computer industry is mainly provided through appropriate fiscal policy measures.

(e) Based on the information available with the Department of Electronics, during 1995, the number of silicon integrated circuits produced in India had been approximately 35.68 million numbers (including 13.46 million Hybrid ICs) and growth rate of 57% is estimated during 1996.

[Translation]

LPG Cylinder

1914. SHRI N.J. RATHWA :
SHRI I.D. SWAMI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the supply of refilled LPG cylinder is made to the L.P.G. consumers by the various Oil Companies after 21 days of booking of the same;

(b) whether various Oil Companies have decided to release L.P.G. connection immediately on receiving a deposit of Rs. four thousand;

(c) if so, whether it is likely to affect the existing L.P.G. consumers to whom refilled cylinders are supplied after 21 days of the booking;

(d) if so, the reaction, of the Government thereto;

(e) whether Government propose to supply the refilled L.P.G. cylinders within a week after the booking for the same; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) :(a) Yes, Sir. LPG refills are supplied to the customers not before 21 days from the date of previous delivery by the Oil Companies.

(b) Yes, Sir. With effect from 20th February, 1997 LPG connection under Tatkal scheme are being released to any person intending to use LPG within 7 days after collecting a lumpsum non-refundable non-time payment of Rs. 4,000/- in addition to normal security deposit payable for loaned equipments.

(c) No, Sir. The release of LPG connection under Tatkal scheme will not affect refill supplies to existing LPG consumers. Supply of refills to existing and new customers will be on same terms.

(d) Not applicable in view of (c) above.

(e) and (f) Normally, refill is supplied within 24 hours after booking, if it is not before 21 days of previous supply. Normally, LPG cylinder lasts more than 21 days.

[English]

Import of Crude Oil

1915. DR. ASIM BALA :
SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH :
SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN :
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to import crude oil from Iraq;

(b) if so, the quantity and the price thereof;

(c) whether this price is favourable for our country; and

(d) if so, the price difference between the existing price and when Iraq was allowed to export oil by the UN?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) to (d) The Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., the canalising agency for import of crude oil, have concluded a contract with SOMO of Iraq on 17.2.97 for import of about 0.5 MMT of Basrah Light Crude Oil during the period 10th March'97

to 7th June'97. The price application for crude oil imports from Iraq is based on the UN approved pricing basis for Far East customers. The price is market related and linked to the daily price quotations of Dubai and Oman crude oils published by platts crude oil marketwire.

All imports of crude oil are made at market related prices.

Indian Market Demographics – The Consumer Class

1916. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have studied the report of the National Council of Applied Economic Research titled "Indian Market Demographics – The Consumer Class" and are in agreement with its findings; and

(b) if not, the areas in which the Government have reservations regarding the findings of this report particularly in respect of income distribution in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) The study on "Indian Market Demographics – The Consumer Class", conducted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), is based on market information survey of the households. It provides demographic information about households classified by income, and ownership and purchases of selected consumer durables.

The Planning Commission utilises the quinquennial household consumer expenditure survey data of the National Sample Survey Organisation, to estimate the incidence of poverty. Although the two sets of data are not comparable, (since the NCAER) data pertains to income and the National Sample Survey data pertains to consumption), the following points of discrepancy are noted;

(i) The NCAER study uses an estimate of population of 916 million in 1993-94, whereas the Planning Commission estimate of population which based on the Expert Group on Population Projection is 891 million.

(ii) The size of households in the two studies are also different. The NCAER study uses an average household size of 6 for the lower income category, whereas in the National Sample Survey, the size of the household in the lowest income category is between 5.43 and 5.67 in rural areas and between 5.64 and 5.82 in urban areas.

(iii) The study divides the entire population in five broad income groups with annual household income as :

(a) Low	:	upto Rs. 20,000
(b) Lower Middle	:	Rs. 20,001 to Rs. 40,000
(c) Middle	:	Rs. 40,001 to Rs. 62,000
(d) Upper Middle	:	Rs. 62,001 to Rs. 86,000
(e) High	:	Above Rs. 86,000

The study does not spell out the basis on which these income ranges are constructed. However, the income limit of the Low income group does not correspond to the definition of the poverty line as accepted by the Task Force and Expert Group, which are specified in terms of per capita consumption expenditure necessary to meet the average calorie intake of 2400 per capita per day in rural areas and 2100 per capita per day in urban areas. These poverty lines are annual per capita consumption expenditure of Rs. 2788 in rural areas and Rs. 3217 in urban areas. Annual household income of Rs. 20,000 in the NCAER study is equivalent to annual per capita income of Rs. 3333. Therefore, not all the households in the Low income category are poor, as per the generally accepted definition of poverty. Besides, nothing is contained in the study which shows that the low income limit corresponds to any defined poverty line.

Officers of A.I. Services

1917. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the IAS personnel are given more weightage in promotion etc. as compared to the other All India Services;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the officials belonging to non-IAS services have protested against this practice; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) No, Sir. The I.A.S. personnel do not get any weightage in promotions as compared to the other all India Services. Their promotion in various grades is governed by statutory rules and well laid-out executive instructions.

(b) to (d) Do not arise, in view of the answer to (a) above.

Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programme in Maharashtra

1918. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :